

of the people and their institutions. The revocation in 1796 of the decree pronouncing him an emigrant was obtained by Mme. de Stael's influence, and he immediately returned to France. It is characteristic of him that during these years he was successively a representative of the King, of Danton, and of the Directory.

To the Institute of France, of which learned body he had been made a member during his absence, he presented on his return his brilliant studies of colonization in general, and of the respective relations between the United States and the rival powers of France and England. But politics, not literature, was his trade. At once he began to study the situation of his own land, and observed with profound penetration both the instability of the government and the straits of the Directory. Accordingly, though nominally their man, and accepting from them the ministry of foreign affairs, he attached himself at once to Bonaparte, in the hope, as he explains in his memoirs, of using the conqueror to restore the monarchy. The latter had the perspicacity to encourage the relation, and from that moment possessed in the very center of affairs an able and congenial representative. It is known that Talleyrand's public letters to Bonaparte were accompanied with private supplements which often ran in a sense quite opposite to that of the main sheet. For instance, nothing could be more satisfactory to the directors than his open account of Fructidor; but it is known that the private letter mercilessly analyzed the situation as impossible and unstable. Attempting a corrupt bargain with the American envoys, Pinckney, Marshall, and Gerry, in regard to the protection of American commerce, he was mercilessly exposed by the indignant ministers, and finally compelled by public opinion to resign from his office. But even in disgrace he continued in Paris as